

London Office:
80-83 Long Lane
London, EC1A 9ET

23/05/2023

Sent via planning portal only

Dear Sir/Madam,

PLANNING APPLICATION – TOWN & COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990

FLAT 1, 15 LINDFIELD GARDENS, LONDON, NW3 6PX

DEMOLITION OF AND ERECTION OF REPLACEMENT LOWER GROUND FLOOR REAR EXTENSION, LOWERING OF LOWER GROUND FLOOR AND EXTERNAL ALTERATIONS INCLUDING WINDOW/DOOR ALTERATIONS, NEW SIDE ENTRANCE ACCESS AND NEW DECKING

Please accept this covering letter as an accompaniment to this planning application for the proposed extensions and alterations to Flat 1, No.15 Lindfield Gardens, London, NW3 6PX ('the site'). Please find enclosed a completed application form with Design and Access Statement, full set of existing and proposed plans, site location plan, CIL questions form, a Basement Impact Assessment (Scoping Report) and an Arboricultural Impact Assessment.

The Site

The site is located on the southwest side of Lindfield Gardens and comprises of a four storey, detached dwelling that has been subdivided into 5 residential flats. Flat 1 which this application relates to is located on the lower ground floor.

The site is located within the Redington and Frognal Neighbourhood Plan Area and the Redington and Frognal Conservation Area where the existing building is identified (along with numbers 1-27) as having a positive contribution to the Conservation Area.

The surrounding area comprises of similar development, largely residential which has a wide variety of roof formations and extensions. There are more commercial services located on Finchley Road to the south. The site lies within a high public transport accessibility level of 6a and a low probability of flooding within flood zone 1.

Planning History

On the 30th April 2023 planning permission was granted (ref: **2023/0283/P**) at flat 5, 15 Lindfield Gardens for the erection of rooftop extension with flat green roof and rooflight within valley roof slope to provide additional accommodation for top floor flat, plus installation of rooflight on south roof slope, dormer window on north roof slope, and associated exterior works.

On the 20th April 2004 planning permission was granted (**ref: 2004/0870/P**) for the erection of a single storey rear conservatory extension to the existing lower ground floor self-contained flat.

On the 15th November 2010 planning permission was granted (**Ref: 2010/5102/P**) for the erection of a single storey rear ground floor extension with rooflight to lower ground floor flat (Class C3).

Pre-Application:

A request for formal pre-application advice (2022/3313/PRE) was submitted to the Council in August 2022 in respect of proposed extensions and alterations to flats 1, 2, 3 and 4 at 15 Lindfield Gardens. The proposal included the creation of a basement floor, extension to lower ground floor, extension and alterations to upper ground floor, new external terrace at first floor and alterations to existing fenestration. As part of this process a site meeting was held on 22/09/2022 and a written response was received from the Local Planning Authority on 02/12/2022.

In response to the feedback received, the proposed development the subject of this planning application has been significantly amended with the proposed basement floor, extensions and alterations to upper ground floor and first floors omitted. The proposed development now relates only to extensions and alterations to the lower ground floor which received support at pre-application and is summarised as follows:

- *'The increase in the size of the existing extension.....does not raise any design or heritage concerns'.*
- *'Along the side (north) elevation, an existing bedroom window is proposed to be replaced with French doors in order to provide access to a side terrace area, which is currently underutilized. This is considered acceptable as long as the new door is of a matching style, constructed of timber framing, and utilizes the existing window opening'.*
- *'Based on the layout and scale of the proposed lower ground floor extension, it is unlikely that there would be any harmful impacts on the sunlight and daylight of the closest neighbouring property at no.17. The existing windows along the north façade of the extension will be enlarged but are unlikely to have any additional impacts as there is a sufficient separation between the extension and the property boundary with no.17. In addition, significant boundary planting exists which will help mitigate any overlooking impacts'.*

The Proposal

The application seeks planning permission for proposed extensions and alterations to Flat 1 (the lower ground floor flat) at 15 Lindfield Gardens. The development can be best described as:

'Demolition of and erection of replacement lower ground floor rear extension, lowering of lower ground floor and external alterations including window/door alterations, new side entrance access and new decking'.

In detail, the proposed extensions and alterations will comprise the following works:

- Replacement of the lower ground floor rear extension.
- Lowering of existing lower ground finished floor level by 150mm
- Replacement of 2 windows in north side elevation with double doors

- Reinstatement of 2 window openings in north side elevation
- Replacement of side access with brick wall and timber door
- Bricking up of existing blocked external door at ground floor front elevation

For full details of the proposed development please refer to the supporting plans and elevations and the design and access statement.

Planning Policy

National Planning Policy

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development which incorporates three specific strands – economic, environmental and social. The following sections are relevant to the consideration of this application; Section 12 (achieving well designed places) and Section 16 (conserving and enhancing the historic environment).

Local Planning Policy

For the purposes of this application, the adopted Development Plan for the London Borough of Camden (LB Camden) comprises the London Plan (2021), the Camden Local Plan (2017), the Redington Frognal Neighbourhood Plan (2021), the Camden Planning Guidance (CPG) Documents and the Redington Frognal Conservation Area Statement (2000).

Planning Assessment

Principle of development:

Law requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The site comprises a building in active residential use and no changes are proposed to the established use class. In such locations, there are no development plan or national planning policies that restrict the extension or alteration of residential properties in principle, subject to the consideration of all other detailed matters.

Design, visual and heritage impacts:

Policy D1 of the Camden Local Plan (CLP) requires development to be of the highest architectural and urban design quality, have particular regard to design and visual impact and to the context within which it is placed, and the contribution it makes to the landscape qualities of the area. CLP Policy D2 states that the Council will preserve, and where appropriate, enhance Camden's rich and diverse heritage assets and their settings, including conservation areas. The aims of the above policies are further reflected in Policies SD1, SD2, SD4, SD5 and SD6 of the Redington Frognal Neighbourhood Plan (RFNP).

Specific guidance in relation to extensions to existing properties and achieving good design is further provided in the 'Home Improvements' and 'Design' Camden Planning Guidance (CPG).

The proposed rear extension by virtue of its siting and design would be restricted from views from the public realm and have very limited visual impact on the street scene or wider conservation area.

Nevertheless, the footprint and layout of the rear extension is in keeping with the pattern of development locally including examples of projecting extensions built to the rear of neighbouring properties at no's 9 and 11 Lindfield Gardens. Please refer to page 6 of the supporting Design and Access Statement. Despite the replacement extension being larger in terms of its depth of projection, it is on a similar footprint as the existing extension and therefore has a similar relationship to the property as the existing extension.

The proposed rear extension by virtue of its single storey height and lower ground floor level would appear as subservient to the existing property. The internal floor is partially stepped down by 800mm to improve headroom without raising the height and massing from the existing. Whilst the existing lower ground floor extension projects 3.24m from the rear elevation and the replacement extension extends a further 4.5m into the rear garden, the proposed depth of extension is modest in comparison to the substantial size of the existing property. Due to the size of the existing rear garden a generous rear garden beyond the rear elevation of the extension will continue to be provided. Furthermore, the replacement and extended decking will not project beyond the rear elevation of the extension thus preserving the soft landscaped rear garden.

The extension is proposed to be constructed from high quality materials to achieve a high standard of finish. The existing extension is finished with horizontal timber slats and the replacement extension is to be finished vertical timber slats with an external timber frame with glazed panels. Whilst the extension will have a contemporary appearance, the materials are similar to that used to neighbouring extensions and the existing extension. The large expanses of glazing at lower ground floor level will allow plenty of natural light into the property whilst creating a strong visual and physical connection between the internal spaces and the greenery of the garden. The proposed flat roof will incorporate a sedum green roof which is promoted within the Home Improvements CPG in terms of its positive visual impact in providing additional greenery, whilst providing biodiversity value, mitigating storm water runoff and the urban heat island effect.

The proposed double doors to the north elevation replaces two existing upvc sash windows which have no historic or architectural merit. The replacement doors are traditional designed timber doors which are more in keeping with the character and appearance of the property. The proposed reinstatement of two window openings on the north side elevation will reintroduce historic openings to the property and by virtue of their location to the rear of the site will have limited visual impact on the overall character and appearance of the property and conservation area. The existing side access to the south side of the property is to be replaced with a new brickwall and timber door which will be of a similar height as the existing railings to this access and the brickwork will be finished to match the existing property. The outward opening door to the rear elevation and the bricking up of existing blocked external door at ground floor front elevation with matching brickwork comprise minor works which will have no discernible visual impact and are considered acceptable.

In summary, the proposed development represents a high-quality proposal which is sympathetic to the existing character and appearance of the existing property and its surrounding context. There will be no adverse effect on the wider views of the Conservation area or the property as a building of positive merit. The proposed rear extension builds upon the existing form of the host property and results in a sensitively designed extension. The proposed development also follows a similar pattern of rear extension to neighbouring sites. The green sedum roof is promoted within the Home Improvements CPG and would have a positive impact on both appearance and biodiversity of the site. The alterations and reinstatement of fenestration represent a suitable form of development which will have limited visual impact from the surrounding area.

For the reasons outlined above, the proposed works will have an acceptable impact on the character and appearance of the building and the Conservation Area and complies with the policies contained within the CLP and RFNP.

Residential amenity:

CLP Policy A1 seeks to protect the amenity of Camden's residents by ensuring the impact of development is fully considered. It seeks to ensure that development protects the quality of life of occupiers and neighbours by only granting permission for development that would not harm the amenity of neighbouring residents. Further guidance is provided in CPG Amenity which sets specific standards of development with regard to amenity.

The proposed extension would not create a sense of enclosure or overbearingness to neighbouring properties or affect their sunlight and daylight levels due to its single storey height and location at lower ground floor level. The proposed windows to the side elevations would not introduce any new views to neighbouring properties and given their siting on the lower ground floor would have no adverse impact on neighbour privacy.

For the reasons outlined above, the proposed development is considered to have an acceptable impact on neighbouring amenity and complies with CLP Policy A1 and Amenity CPG.

Trees:

CLP Policy A3 states that the Council will resist the loss of trees and vegetation of significant amenity, historic, cultural or ecological value. It further requires trees and vegetation which are to be retained to be satisfactorily protected during the demolition and construction phase of development. This is echoed in the guidance contained in the Trees CPG.

RFNP Policy BGI 2 states that development should protect trees that are important to biodiversity, rear garden tree corridors, local character and / or the Conservation Area, and that veteran trees should be fully protected during construction.

The application is supported by an Arboricultural Impact Assessment Report and Outline Method Statement. The assessment concludes that the potential impacts of development are relatively low in terms of both quality trees removed and the root protection area encroachments of retained trees. The potential impacts of the development can largely be mitigated through design and precautionary measures, and that the species affected are generally tolerant of root disturbance and crown reduction. The trees recommended for felling are of little individual significance, such that their loss will not affect the visual character of the area.

For the reasons outlined above the proposed development will not result in the loss of any trees and vegetation of significant amenity, historic, cultural or ecological value, and it has been demonstrated how those trees to be retained will be satisfactorily protected throughout the development. For full details please refer to the supporting Arboricultural Impact Assessment.

Excavation works/lowering of floor level:

CLP Policy A5 states that the Council will only permit basement development where it is demonstrated that the proposal would not cause harm to neighbouring properties; the structural, ground, or water conditions of the area; the character and amenity of the area; and the significance of heritage assets. RFNP Policy UD1 states that basements and other underground development should have no

significant impacts on garden spaces including protection of trees and the impact on garden amenity and green spaces (these issues have been considered above). Additionally, it requires impacts on neighbouring properties, water and land stability to be considered and that development proposals should be accompanied by sufficient information to allow a proper assessment of these impacts.

The proposed development comprises the lowering of the existing floor levels by 150mm to create additional headroom and to include new damp proofing, and the proposed finished floor level of the replacement extension will partly be 800mm below the existing lower ground. Whilst the proposed works do not involve the construction of a basement level, the application is nevertheless supported by a Basement Impact Assessment (BIA) (Scoping Report) to consider the effects of the proposed subterranean works on the local hydrology, geology and hydrogeology, as well as the potential impacts to neighbours and the wider environment.

The BIA concludes that no significant risks have been identified in relation to land or slope stability, nor are there any significant hydrological or hydrogeological impacts. The site has a very low risk of flooding from surface water or reservoirs and a very low risk of flooding from rivers and sea. Flooding from groundwater is unlikely. The proposed development does not change the flooding characteristics of the site, and therefore these risks remain unchanged.

The BIA has considered the stability of both the host building and the neighbouring structures. Due to the scale of the proposed works, distance from nearby buildings and through the adoption of good construction practice and a suitable temporary works sequence, the impact on neighbouring structures is expected to be 'Negligible' to 'Very slight' in accordance with the Burland Scale.

In summary, potential risks identified in the BIA have been discounted or are not considered to be significant. Therefore, no further investigation or assessment is considered necessary prior to construction. To minimise risk during construction a series of standard precautions (including radar scanning to discount buried services and excavations to be undertaken with a watching brief) are recommended within the BIA and can be controlled by suitably worded planning conditions.

Summary

As demonstrated within this letter and supporting documents, the works are considered to have an acceptable impact on the character and appearance of the property and Conservation area. The development is therefore in accordance with the aforementioned Development Plan policies, and it is respectfully requested that planning permission is granted.

I trust this letter and the enclosed documents provide you with sufficient information to determine the application but if you require any points of clarification or have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully

Louis Brewer
Planner
SM Planning